March 7, 2017

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley, Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We are Columbia University alumni who attended the school during the years Judge Neil M. Gorsuch was there, and we enthusiastically write in support of his nomination to the United States Supreme Court. Among us are CEOs and stay at home parents, finance executives and professors, lawyers and doctors, writers and artists, actors and musicians, entrepreneurs and engineers, scientists and salespeople, a public company president and a public school principal. We hail from across this great country: North to South, East to West, and most places in between. We are of different faiths and ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. We are Democrats, Republicans and Independents. As diverse as we are, we share a common belief that Neil Gorsuch would be an exemplary Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

At Columbia, Neil Gorsuch notably distinguished himself among his peers. He was a serious and brilliant student who earned deep respect from teachers and students alike. With an encyclopedic knowledge on a staggering array of subjects, he could be counted on for his insightful, logical and well-reasoned comments. He carried a full and challenging course-load, finishing in three years and graduating Phi Beta Kappa. So special were his intellect, academic record and character that even then — some thirty years ago — there was a shared sense that he was poised for a meaningful and purposeful future.

The hallmark of Neil Gorsuch’s tenure at Columbia was his unflagging commitment to respectful and open dialogue on campus. During the 1980s, Columbia was a tumultuous place, regularly gripped by sharp disagreements on social and political controversies of the times. Despite an often contentious environment, Neil was a steadfast believer that we could disagree without being disagreeable. To be sure, he could deliver a devastating argument, laden with carefully researched facts and presented in a crisp and organized manner. Yet he was always a thoughtful and fair-minded listener who would not hesitate to re-evaluate his own beliefs when presented with persuasive arguments. His amiable nature, good humor and respect for differing viewpoints was admired and appreciated by all.
To further his commitment to elevating the political discourse on campus, Neil co-founded *The Federalist Paper* — named after the canonical texts penned by Columbia alumni Alexander Hamilton and John Jay. While it provided a voice for conservative viewpoints not otherwise heard on campus, the paper actively solicited and published articles from those who didn't share those beliefs, often in “point-counterpoint” features presenting both sides of complex issues. As an editor, Neil strove to ensure that all articles published by the paper were nuanced, thoughtful and fair. Of course, they were often presented with Neil’s sense of civility and wit.

On campus, Neil was an upstanding person and a devoted friend; a man of unyielding integrity, faith in our institutions and unfailing politeness. For his kindness and down-to-earth persona, we often joked that he was a modern-day Jimmy Stewart. Decades later, he still can be counted on for a favor, a kind word, or a heartfelt letter to mark joyful or tragic milestones. And despite his sterling resume — including subsequent degrees from Harvard and Oxford, a clerkship for two Supreme Court Justices, a high-level position at the Department of Justice, and appointment to the federal bench — he remains a humble man with no appetite for self-promotion.

The hallmark of our Columbia education was the dynamic exchange of ideas in search of greater, universal truths. Not surprisingly, Columbians tend to agree on very little. Even when we do, we still find reason for further debate. Those of us who were fortunate enough to know Neil Gorsuch during our time at Columbia are, however, united in our belief that he would serve our country with honor and distinction on the Supreme Court. We urge the Senate to consider and vote upon the nomination of Judge Gorsuch and we wholeheartedly recommend that he be confirmed as an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Respectfully,

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